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STATINTL

CPYRGHT *But Don't Wear It, Please*

According to the Scriptures a prophet can't expect much honor from his own country. Nor can American intelligence agents, it seems.

The CIA belatedly got around the other day to recognizing the efforts of Francis Gary Powers, former U-2 pilot. In recognition of his travail after being shot down over Russia five years ago, standing trial, and enduring captivity, it awarded him a medal.

At least that's the way the report goes. Actually the ceremony was secret. The pilot is under instruction not to discuss details. It never happened. Reportedly he can't wear the thing. And anyhow, it's an "under-the-lapel" decoration that wouldn't show even if he dared pin it on some morning.

We all know the CIA has its problems. But if it is necessary to be all this secret about Mr. Powers' "award" one is tempted to ask: Why bother?

The Soviets do these things differently. They revealed the other day that Col. Rudolf I. Abel, whom we swapped to get Mr. Powers back safely, had indeed been a master spy and was decorated by the Communist party and the Russian government after returning to Moscow.

The Russians have always been famous, even in Czarist times, for wearing their ribbons and medals on their chests at every possible occasion no matter how this interfered with eating

stroganoff or smooching on the patio. And if we know Col. Abel, he's probably parading down Red Square with that award clinking for all to see.

That's the way it is with the spy game. Some cultures glorify it, and others make their medals out of Saran Wrap.